

FERMENTATION AT RETAIL INDUSTRY GUIDANCE

Section 5K-4.0050, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.)

Fermentation is an effective method of preserving food without the need of refrigeration. It is performed by adding microorganisms like bacteria and yeast to food. The microorganisms break down sugars, carbohydrates, proteins and fats to produce alcohol, lactic or acetic acids, as well as other substances which contribute to the enhanced flavor of the product. This process drops the pH of the food product rendering the food safe at room temperature for an extended timeframe.

A wide range of foods can be fermented, but some commonly fermented food products include: meats (salami), fish (herring), cheeses, vegetables (sauerkraut, pickles, kimchi), breads, and alcoholic beverages.

Improperly fermented foods can create an unsafe product which may cause illness or death. For this reason, these products must be created using an accepted HACCP plan. The Department requires a Special Process Approval (SPA) application be completed and submitted with all supporting documentation as stated in the instructions for evaluation and acceptance. All other applicable laws and rules apply.

Documentation Requirements:

- **SPA application**
- **HACCP plan:** Provide an adequate HACCP plan with copies of potential monitoring records.
- **Validated Process:** This is a document obtained from a certified laboratory, called a Process Authority, which will test both your process and your food to see if the result is safe and wholesome. Please go to www.afdo.org/foodprocessing to locate a Process Authority.
- **Food Process Flow Diagram:** This will illustrate the flow of food throughout the process. It must include the food ingredients and their amounts as well as their CCP points.
- **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs):** Step-by-step description of the entire process from start to the finished food product. Include ingredients/amounts, each preparation step, method(s) of storage/distribution and display for sale, labels (include use by date, etc.), lot identification code system and how you track each lot, and calibration of applicable instruments.
- **Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (SSOP):** These are the cross-contamination strategies and sanitation practices for your operation. State how things will be cleaned, how often, with what sanitizer and at what concentration, etc. Be careful to include all surfaces (tables, cutting boards), as well as all pieces of equipment and utensils required for making the product.
- **Food employee and supervisory training plan:** This is a document which outlines how those involved in this special process will be trained in all procedures and plans associated with this process.
- **Floorplan:** Layout of the processing area; include equipment placement involved in the process. Does not have to be professionally created but should be as accurate as possible.
- **Any other pertinent, applicable documentation to ensure the safety of the finished product.**



Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Division of Food Safety

FERMENTATION AT RETAIL INDUSTRY GUIDANCE

Please submit all required materials along with a completed Special Process Approval application to:
RetailHACCPspa@FDACS.gov

The Department will review the information submitted and if satisfactory, you will receive written notification from the Department stating the SPA has been granted and what supporting documents the Department has accepted. These documents must be kept on site where fermentation is taking place and made available to the regulatory authority upon request. The inspector will review the documentation and ensure the establishment is implementing the accepted plans/procedures and retaining monitoring records as required to document proof of control.

1-800 HELP FLA
FDACS.gov

FDACS-P-02169 09/22

